Telephone connections in Sugauli Telephone Exchange

†1179. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone connections issued so far from Sugauli Telephone Exchange in Motihari District of Bihar;

(b) the number of applications received so far and the number of connections provided as well as the number of applications pending in this regard;

(c) whether the ongoing expansion of the exchange has since been completed and if not, by when it is likely to be completed; and

(d) whether there is any plan to convert that exchange into an electronic exchange so that fast-dialing facility is made available?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Sir, 443 telephone connections have been issued so far from Sugauli Telephone Exchange in Motihari District of Bihar.

(b) 879 applications have been received so far, out of which 443 telephone connections have been provided and 436 applications are pending.

(c) New building construction work for expansion of Sugauli Telephone Exchange is in progress and is likely to be completed by June, 2002. 1000 lines Remote Switching Unit is likely to be installed by August, 2002.

(d) At present, three units of 256 Port C-DOT Electronic Exchange are working and fast-dialing facility is available.

Branch Post Office at Nandla in Shimla

†1180. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to open a branch post office at Nandla village in Shimla District so that adjacent villages can also be benefited;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) As per the Departmental norms for opening of branch post offices, proposed post office should not be less than 3 kilometres away from the nearest existing post office and the percentage of income to cost of the proposed post office is required minimum 15% in hilly areas. However, the distance of village Nandla from Jangla sub post office is 1.5 kms. and anticipated percentage of income to cost of proposed office is 8.51%. The opening of a branch post office at village Nandla in Shimla district is, therefore, not justified under the existing norms.

Software offshore projects

1181. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the persistent tension between India and Pakistan has created a cloud of uncertainty in the field of software offshore projects; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.